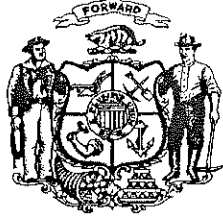


THE STATE OF WISCONSIN

SENATE CHAIR
MARK MILLER

317-E Capitol
P.O. Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707-7882
Phone: (608) 266-9170



ASSEMBLY CHAIR
MARK POCAN

309-E Capitol
P.O. Box 8953
Madison, WI 53708-8953
Phone: (608) 266-8570

JOINT COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

MEMORANDUM

To: Members
Joint Committee on Finance

From: Senator Mark Miller
Representative Mark Pocan

Date: July 29, 2010

Re: Update from the Government Accountability Board on the
Statewide Voter Registration System

Attached is a copy of the April, May and June report from the Government Accountability Board on the status of the Wisconsin Statewide Voter Registration System.

The report is being provided for your information only. No formal action is required by the Committee. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions.

Attachment

MM:MP:jm

State of Wisconsin\Government Accountability Board

212 East Washington Avenue, 3rd Floor
Post Office Box 7984
Madison, WI 53707-7984
Voice (608) 266-8005
Fax (608) 267-0500
E-mail: gab@wi.gov
<http://gab.wi.gov>



JUDGE GORDON MYSE
Chair

KEVIN J. KENNEDY
Director and General Counsel

July 29, 2010

The Honorable Mark Miller, Senate Co-Chair
Joint Committee on Finance
Room 409 South, State Capitol
Madison, WI 53703

The Honorable Mark Pocan, Assembly Co-Chair
Joint Committee on Finance
Room 309 East, State Capitol
Madison, WI 53703

Dear Senator Miller and Representative Pocan:

I am pleased to provide you and your committee members with an update on the Wisconsin Statewide Voter Registration System (SVRS) for the months of April, May and June 2010.

The reporting requirement for the Election Administration Fund that supports the SVRS sunset on June 30, 2009, in accordance with 2007 Wisconsin Act 20, Section 9227(IL). Although this mandate is expired, we committed to continuing to report quarterly on the progress of the SVRS in order to keep the JCF informed and involved.

SVRS continues to serve our local election partners effectively by being a valuable tool in the management and administration of elections in Wisconsin. Equally important is the fact that our 1,923 county and municipal clerk customers and their staffs are noticing the continuing improvements we are steadily making to the System. This attached report brings you up-to-date since our last quarterly summary regarding the status of SVRS core activities and noteworthy achievements.

Please let us know if we can provide additional information. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Kevin J. Kennedy'.

Kevin J. Kennedy
Director and General Counsel
Government Accountability Board

cc: Co-Chairs, Joint Legislative Committee on Audit
Senator Spencer Coggs

RECEIVED
JUL 29 2010
BY: *J. Finney*

Secretary Daniel J. Schooff, Department of Administration
Robert Lang, Legislative Fiscal Bureau
Vickie Holten, Legislative Fiscal Bureau
Caitlin Fredrick, State Budget Office Analyst
Nathaniel E. Robinson, Elections Division Administrator
Barbara A. Hansen, SVRS Director

Wisconsin Government Accountability Board

Statewide Voter Registration System Quarterly Summary April 1, 2010 through June 30, 2010

The following activities occurred regarding the Statewide Voter Registration System (SVRS) during this quarterly reporting period:

Quarterly Fiscal Summary

Expenditures for SVRS for April, May and June 2010 totaled \$393,912.89 which included:

- A. Staffing costs;
- B. Payments Made to Outside Contractors; and,
- C. Supplies and Services Costs.

Expenditures for SVRS' salaries, supplies and services for this same period last year (April, May and June 2009) totaled \$239,822.02. Factors contributing to the April, May and June 2010 quarter expenditures include an additional \$84,049.74 in staff salaries of which \$65,052.40 was paid for LTEs.

LTEs assisted with the Retroactive HAVA Check process; the 2010 Fall Election Ballot Access and Challenge Process between June 1 and July 20, 2010; testing the new version (7.1) of the Statewide Voter Registration System; and, preparing for the July 21-22, 2010, Fall Election Ballot Access and Challenge meeting of the Government Accountability Board.

An additional \$16,000.37 was paid for fringe benefits during the April, May and June 2010, and \$37,500 was used during the April, May and June 2010 quarter to purchase Citrix user licenses for SVRS.

SVRS Core Activities

1. Software Upgrade(s)

Software development efforts during this reporting period focused on the new version of SVRS, version 7.0. The new version of SVRS, version 7.0 has been tested and installed to the SVRS production environment and is available to be used by our clerk users.

Version 7.0 includes a core software upgrade to keep current with Microsoft's .NET development platform, as well as fixes related to absentee, candidate ballot access tracking, reports and mailings, and improving the response time of the SVRS. The new version of SVRS also allows Board staff to retire the current antiquated and unsupported Elections Administration system, SWEBIS II, after appropriate archiving of the data is completed.

The next version of SVRS, version 7.1, has been through the planning stage and is currently in the testing process. This version includes simplifications to the Absentee process and updates required to implement the Federal Military and Overseas Voters

Empowerment Act (MOVE) for the November General Election. To meet the MOVE Act requirement of allowing a military or overseas voter to freely find out whether their absentee ballot has been received, the SVRS Voter Public Access (VPA) website is also being updated. This build is targeted to be available to clerks in late July.

2. Data Interface

Clerks continue to use SVRS to run HAVA Checks to validate against Department of Transportation (DOT) and Social Security Administration (SSA) records, and to confirm matches with Department of Corrections (DOC) for felon information, and Department of Health Services (DHS) for death data, as part of on-going HAVA compliance.

Clerks process HAVA Checks and confirm matches on an ongoing basis during the course of their daily election administration tasks, having done so since the Interfaces became functional in SVRS on August 6, 2008. During the months of April, May and June 2010, clerks processed approximately 24,568 HAVA Checks with DOT/SSA on new voter applications in SVRS.

3. Election Readiness

During this reporting period, staff provided training and technical assistance to county and municipal clerks for closing out the Spring Election Cycle and preparing for the Fall Election season. For example:

- SVRS Checklists III for the 2010 Spring Election was distributed to clerks.
- SVRS trainers conducted classes in SVRS for beginners, advanced users and those who are looking for a refresher course in preparation for the upcoming 2010 election cycle.
- Prior to the April election, G.A.B. provided extended hours of operation where the G.A.B. Help Desk remained open and Board staff was available to assist local election officials. The extended hours included evening hours the week before and Saturday hours immediately preceding the election events. Similar arrangements are intended prior to the September Partisan Primary and the November General Election.

4. Data Requests

The Board regularly receives requests from customers interested in purchasing electronic voter lists. The SVRS allows us to generate electronic voter lists statewide, for any county or municipality in the state, or by any election district, from congressional districts to school districts. The voter lists also include all elections that a voter has participated in, going back to 2006 when the system was deployed.

Due to the upcoming Fall Election events, the Board received many data requests during April, May, and June 2010. The following statistics demonstrate the activity in this area:

- Fifty-five (55) inquiries were received requesting information on purchasing electronic voter lists from the SVRS system. This is compared to 122 for January, February and March 2010.
- Thirty (30) electronic voter lists were purchased.
- No paper voter lists were purchased.
- \$3,570 was received for the 30 electronic voter lists requested.

5. Voter Registration Statistics

As of Thursday, July 8, 2010, there were a total of 4,518,472 voter records stored in SVRS. Of this number, 3,423,093 were active voters; 870,709 were inactive; and 224,670 were cancelled voters.

Note: An active voter is one whose name will appear on the poll list. An inactive voter is one who may become active again, e.g. convicted felon or someone who has not voted in four years. A cancelled voter is one who will not become active again, e.g. deceased person.

The number of records in SVRS has decreased slightly since the last report due to the work of clerk users and Board staff in merging duplicate voter records as part of regular list maintenance. The number of records in SVRS decreases slightly due to the work of clerk users and Board staff in merging duplicate voter records as part of regular list maintenance. 7,454 merges have been completed in SVRS between April 1, 2010, and June 30, 2010.

Noteworthy SVRS Initiatives

1. Status: Retroactive HAVA Checks

The Retroactive HAVA Check Project is now complete, with the Final Report presented to the Board at the March 23 - 24, 2010 meeting. A copy of the *Final Report of the Retroactive HAVA Check Project* was provided with last quarter's report.

Staff is currently evaluating effective strategies to proceed with the process of resolving the remaining non-matches in records of those voters who did not respond to the initial Retroactive HAVA Checks.

2. Status: Efforts to Improve the Statewide Voter Registration System's Performance

As previously reported, an Ad-Hoc SVRS Study Team was formed to evaluate the SVRS and plan for the future of the application.

As reported previously, the Team had met to review a proposed "roadmap" for the future of SVRS and provide comments to Department of Administration/Division of Enterprise Technology (DET) representatives. However, it was not presented to Board management.

Instead, Board management is moving forward with preliminary negotiations based on a proposal presented by DET to provide more comprehensive IS support services for the Board's portfolio of applications for the entire agency. The Director and General Counsel and agency management are evaluating a draft Memorandum of Acceptance created by Board staff. Next steps will include sharing the draft with DET representatives. The Team's "roadmap" and DET's proposal is intended to blend to form a cohesive plan for the future of SVRS.

During this reporting period, SVRS was successfully used throughout the state for judicial, school board and other local elections.

3. Inter-State Voter Registration Data Sharing
(A Collaborative Initiative to Detect Possible Border Election Fraud)

One of the methods to improve the accuracy of voter information in SVRS is to share voter registration data between states, and enhance the detection of possible voter fraud, particularly the states that border Wisconsin: Illinois, Iowa, Michigan and Minnesota. The Team was formed in December 2010 and is in contact with representatives in our neighboring states an agreement has been formed with one state.

Under current state statutes, the state is prohibited from sharing the voter's date of birth. In order to have effective matching, the date of birth is a necessary piece of identifying information. The Team proposed that Board staff perform the matching in-house. This will allow the Board staff to match Wisconsin voter data with other states' data and still comply with the law.

Wisconsin's Chief Election Official and Minnesota's Chief Election Official entered into a Memorandum of Understanding for an exchange of voter participation information. On April 15, 2010, Kevin J. Kennedy, Director and General Counsel of the Government Accountability Board, signed the agreement with the State of Minnesota to share voter information including voter participation data from the November 4, 2008 General Election. Board staff is conducting the comparison in-house, is sharing the potential matching information with our Minnesota counterparts, and is working to gather corroborating information from the appropriate local election clerks in a process similar to the Voter/Felon Comparison Audit. Verifying information with clerks helps eliminate false matches that may have resulted from poll worker inadvertent errors or clerical errors made in SVRS. When staff finishes gathering and analyzing documentation from local officials, any confirmed cases of double voting will be forwarded to the appropriate district attorney for prosecution, in coordination with the county attorney in Minnesota.

The Board staff working on this initiative intends to continue to develop similar agreements with Wisconsin's other neighboring states, i.e. Illinois, Iowa and Michigan.

4. Online Voter Registration Initiative

Board staff and staff from the Department of Transportation/Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) continue to collaborate and study online voter registration and automatic voter

registration limited to a partnership with DOT/DMV. Board staff expects to prepare reports to present to the Board and Legislature sometime during the first quarter of 2011.

5. Improving the Canvass Process

The Team to improve the canvas process and retire the Board's current election administration software, SWEBIS II, worked with DET on proposed changes to the process. DET developed the canvass application taking into account business requirements and comments from Board staff. The automated canvass process will also set the stage for election night reporting.

The migration of the canvass process to a web-based, online platform will significantly improve Board staff's administrative efficiency and effectiveness. The G.A.B. Canvass Reporting System will be completed in time to be used for the 2010 Fall Election Season. It is anticipated that this same web-based, online platform will improve counties' Boards of Canvass administrative processes, and it will measurably reduce the number of Board staff and staff time to certify state and federal canvass results.

On Thursday, May 13, 2010, a Clerk Advisory Committee made up of County Clerks met at the G.A.B. offices to view the new canvass reporting process. The clerks had the opportunity for hands on testing and experimentation with the process. All of the clerks in attendance found the process easy to use and were receptive to utilizing it for the Fall 2010 election events. The clerks also thought it would ease the administrative processes at county and municipal clerk offices.

On Tuesday, June 22, 2010, the G.A.B. Canvass Reporting System prototype was presented at the Wisconsin County Clerks' Association during their 105th Annual Summer Symposium in Shawano. 60 of the 72 County Clerks were in attendance. The prototype was enthusiastically received by all.

The migration of the canvass process to a web-based, online platform is nearly complete and will be in place for the canvass of the September Partisan Primary. Training of county clerks on the canvass reporting system will occur in August. An electronic canvass reporting system will significantly improve staff's administrative efficiency and effectiveness. The Partisan Primary is the most complicated and cumbersome election to canvass, so Board staff anticipates the canvass reporting system will measurably reduce the number of staff time to complete canvass.

In addition, changes to the SVRS application related to the candidate ballot-access filing tracking were made and used for the current nomination filing process for Fall 2010.

6. Voter/Felon Comparison

In accordance with State statutes, the Board performs an audit that compares voter participation records in SVRS against convicted felon records at Department of Corrections. This audit is used to detect if felons improperly voted in a given the election. There is no new information since the last report.

90-day Forecast

1. Voter/Felon Comparison – During the next reporting period, staff will perform the comparison when the name of a person was found who is on the DOC list and was a voter in SVRS for the 2010 February Spring Primary and 2010 April Spring Election.
2. Polling Place Accessibility Survey – G.A.B. will migrate the polling place Accessibility Survey from a paper format to a web-based, online format. An electronic Accessibility Reporting and Assessment System will significantly improve staff's administrative efficiency and effectiveness in the monitoring, evaluation, and enforcement of polling place accessibility for our disabled and elderly voters. This new system will be completed in time to be used for the 2010 Fall Election Season. The information will be stored in the SVRS database and will be available to interested persons through SVRS' Voter Public Access.
3. Election Readiness – Staff will continue to work with our 1,851 municipal and 72 county clerks to prepare for the 2010 September 14 Partisan Primary and 2010 November 2 General Election, taking into account updates in the SVRS software.
4. Decennial Census – Work is being done to ready SVRS to accept results of the 2010 Decennial Census. Refinements are being made to SVRS to enable SVRS to adjust new address ranges, using GIS technology, when Wisconsin Congressional, State Senate and State Assembly Districts are re-drawn in 2011, based on the 2010 Census results.
5. A New Approach to Ensuring IT Support for the G.A.B. -- The G.A.B. Management Team is continuing to work with the Department of Administration's Chief Information Technology Officer/Division of Enterprise Technology, and his staff to address technical service support issues and explore means of managing our information technology (IT) application development and support portfolio. A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between G.A.B. and DOA./DET is close to being memorialized.

The Department of Administration has implemented new rates for IT services which increase agency IT costs by more than 50% this new SFY-2011 fiscal year. If implemented, the proposed MOA approach may be a means to lower or at least stabilize IT cost for the duration of this SFY-2011 fiscal year.